

## Social Security Administration

## §404.1619

health service, at least 1 year of which is post masters degree.

(4) In claims adjudicated under the procedures in part 405 of this chapter, psychological experts employed by or under contract with the State agencies must meet the qualification standards prescribed by the Commissioner.

(f) *Are there any limitations on what a psychological consultant can evaluate?* Psychological consultants are limited to the evaluation of mental impairments, as explained in §404.1615(d). Psychological consultants also are limited as to when they can serve as a member of a team that makes a disability determination. They may do so only when a mental impairment is the only impairment in the claim or when there is a combination of a mental impairment with another impairment but the mental impairment alone would justify a finding of disability.

[65 FR 34958, June 1, 2000, as amended at 71 FR 16445, Mar. 31, 2006]

### **§404.1617 Reasonable efforts to obtain review by a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist.**

(a) The State agency must determine if additional qualified psychiatrists and psychologists are needed to make the necessary reviews (see §404.1615(d)). Where it does not have sufficient resources to make the necessary reviews, the State agency must attempt to obtain the resources needed. If the State agency is unable to obtain additional psychiatrists and psychologists because of low salary rates or fee schedules it should attempt to raise the State agency's levels of compensation to meet the prevailing rates for psychiatrists' and psychologists' services. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the State agency will seek assistance from us. We will assist the State agency as necessary. We will also monitor the State agency's efforts and where the State agency is unable to obtain the necessary services, we will make every reasonable effort to provide the services using Federal resources.

(b) Federal resources may include the use of Federal contracts for the services of qualified psychiatrists and psychologists to review mental impairment cases. Where Federal resources are required to perform these reviews,

which are a basic State agency responsibility, and where appropriate, the State agency's budget will be reduced accordingly.

(c) Where every reasonable effort is made to obtain the services of a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist to review a mental impairment case, but the professional services are not obtained, a physician who is not a psychiatrist will review the mental impairment case. For these purposes, every reasonable effort to ensure that a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist review mental impairment cases will be considered to have been made only after efforts by both State and Federal agencies as set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section are made.

[52 FR 33927, Sept. 9, 1987]

### **§404.1618 Notifying claimants of the disability determination.**

The State agency will prepare denial notices in accordance with subpart J of this part whenever it makes a disability determination which is wholly or partly unfavorable to the claimant.

## QUICK DISABILITY DETERMINATIONS

### **§404.1619 Quick disability determination process.**

(a) If we identify a claim as one involving a high degree of probability that the individual is disabled, and we expect that the individual's allegations will be easily and quickly verified, we will refer the claim to the State agency for consideration under the quick disability determination process pursuant to this section and §404.1620(c).

(b) If we refer a claim to the State agency for a quick disability determination, a designated quick disability determination examiner must:

(1) Have a medical or psychological consultant verify that the medical evidence in the file is sufficient to determine that, as of the alleged onset date, the individual's physical or mental impairment(s) meets the standards we establish for making quick disability determinations;

(2) Make quick disability determinations based only on the medical and nonmedical evidence in the files; and

(3) Subject to the provisions in paragraph (c) of this section, make the

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quick disability determination by applying the rules in subpart P of this part.

(c) If the quick disability determination examiner cannot make a determination that is fully favorable to the individual or if there is an unresolved disagreement between the disability examiner and the medical or psychological consultant, the State agency will adjudicate the claim using the regularly applicable procedures in this subpart.

[72 FR 51177, Sept. 6, 2007]

### ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

#### § 404.1620 General administrative requirements.

(a) The State will provide the organizational structure, qualified personnel, medical consultant services, and a quality assurance function sufficient to ensure that disability determinations are made accurately and promptly. We may impose specific administrative requirements in these areas and in those under “Administrative Responsibilities and Requirements” in order to establish uniform, national administrative practices or to correct the areas of deficiencies which may later cause the State to be substantially failing to comply with our regulations or other written guidelines. We will notify the State, in writing, of the administrative requirements being imposed and of any administrative deficiencies it is required to correct. We will allow the State 90 days from the date of this notice to make appropriate corrections. Once corrected, we will monitor the State’s administrative practices for 180 days. If the State does not meet the requirements or correct all of the deficiencies, or, if some of the deficiencies recur, we may initiate procedures to determine if the State is substantially failing to follow our regulations or other written guidelines.

(b) The State is responsible for making accurate and prompt disability determinations.

(c) Each State agency will designate experienced disability examiners to

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handle claims we refer to it under § 404.1619(a).

[46 FR 29204, May 29, 1981, as amended at 56 FR 11018, Mar. 14, 1991; 72 FR 51177, Sept. 6, 2007]

#### § 404.1621 Personnel.

(a) *Equal employment opportunity.* The State will comply with all applicable Federal statutes, executive orders and regulations concerned with equal employment opportunities.

(b) *Selection, tenure, and compensation.* The State agency will, except as may be inconsistent with paragraph (a) of this section, adhere to applicable State approved personnel standards in the selection, tenure, and compensation of any individual employed in the disability program.

(c) *Travel.* The State will make personnel available to attend meetings or workshops as may be sponsored or approved by us for furthering the purposes of the disability program.

(d) *Restrictions.* Subject to appropriate Federal funding, the State will, to the best of its ability, facilitate the processing of disability claims by avoiding personnel freezes, restrictions against overtime work, or curtailment of facilities or activities.

#### § 404.1622 Training.

The State will insure that all employees have an acceptable level of competence. We will provide training and other instructional materials to facilitate basic and advanced technical proficiency of disability staff in order to insure uniformity and effectiveness in the administration of the disability program. We will conduct or specify training, as appropriate, but only if:

(a) A State agency’s performance approaches unacceptable levels; or

(b) The material required for the training is complex or the capacity of the State to deliver the training is in doubt and uniformity of the training is essential.

#### § 404.1623 Facilities.

(a) *Space, equipment, supplies, and other services.* Subject to appropriate Federal funding, the State will provide adequate space, equipment, supplies, and other services to facilitate making